

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 17292 300555Z

14

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3054

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, PK, BG

SUBJECT: CONGRESS PARTY AND PRIME MINISTER SEE EXTERNAL FORCES
PROMOTING DISCORD

SUMMARY: IN A GENERALLY BLAND AND GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY
RESOLUTION THE CONGRESS PARTY AGAIN TOOK NOTE THAT "EXTERNAL
FORCES" WERE WORKING TO PRESSURE INDIAN AND DESTABLIZE SOUTH
ASIA. THE CONGRESS CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE DECEMBER 28 EXPRESSED
APPRECIATION TO THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES FOR UNDERSTANDING
INDIA, SALUTED THE VICTORY OF VIETNAM, AND DEPLORED THE US BASED
AT DIEGO GARCIA. PAKISTAN WAS OFFERED AN OLIVE BRANCH, BUT DACCA
WAS WARNED OF INDIA'S "DEEP INTEREST" AND "VITA STAKE" IN
BANGLADESH. FONMIN CHAVAN BALANCED THE PICTURE SOMEWHAT BY EX-
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 17292 300555Z

PLAINING THE EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

WHILE THIS FORMAL FOREIGN POLICY RHETORIC IN CHANDIGARH HAS BEEN STANDARD IF RELATIVELY MUTED. MRS. GANDHI FIRED HERSELF UP WHEN SPEAKING BEFORE YOUTH CONGRESS MEMBERS DECEMBER 29 AND WARNED THAT SOME INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FORCES STILL CONTINUED TO POSE A THREAT TO INDIA, THOUGH THEY WERE LYING DORMANT AT THE MOMENT. THESE FORCES, SHE SAID, HAD ALWAYS HELPED OUR ENEMIES AND OPPOSED INDIA BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT TOLERATE HER BECOMING STRONG. "NOW THEY ARE TEACHING US WHAT DEMOCRACY IS AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO." MRS. GANDHI SAID THE FORCES AGAINST INDIA WHETHER WITHIN OR OUTSIDE WERE KEEPING QUIET NOT BECAUSE OF LOVE FOR INDIA. THEY KNOW THAT "WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY TACKLED THE SITUATION AND ANY CRITICISM OR OPPOSITION AT THIS STAGE WOULD NOT GET THEM ANYWHERE. BUT THEY ARE FULL OF VENOM AGAINST US."

1. THE CHANDIGARH MEETING OF THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE (CWC) SET THE STAGE FOR THE GOVERNING PARTY TO HEED THE PRIME MINISTER'S LATEST EXPOSITION, ADOPT A DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, AND LISTEN TO THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS' COMMENTS ON INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY. ON DECEMBER 27 THE PRIME MINISTER REPLYING TO AN INDIAN INTERVIEWER'S QUESTION ABOUT THREATS FROM EXTERNAL POWERS, SAID THAT EFFORTS ARE GOING ON TO PRESSURE INDIA. REFERRING TO THE COLD WAR IN EUROPE (SIC), CONFLICTS IN SPITE OF DETENTE, AND EVENTS IN ANGOLA SHE SAID SHE DID NOT WANT TO DWELL ON WHAT "THESE FORCES" ARE DOING IN INDIA.

2. THE CWC'S DECEMBER 28 RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS EXPRESSES APPRECIATION TO "THE NON-ALIGNED WORLD AND THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES (WHICH) HAVE SHOWN UNDERSTANDING AND GIVEN SUPPORT TO OUR MEASURES TO FLIGHT DOMESTIC REACTION AND EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE." THE CONGRESS ALSO HAILED THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT, THE "GLORIOUS VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA..." AND SEES A REUNITED VIETNAM AND A STABLE AND PROGRESSIVE CAMBODIA AND LAOS AS "MAJOR FACTORS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA." STEPS TO STRENGTHEN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT ARE APPLAUDED AND THE AUGUST 1976 SUMMIT IN SRI LANKA IS SEEN AS A STEP IN REAFFIRMING THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE MOVEMENT.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 17292 300555Z

3. DIEGO GARCIA COMES IN FOR THE USUAL CRITICISM. THE CWC "DEPLORES THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE ... BASE...AND SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS OF THE LITTORAL COUNTRIES TO PRESERVE THE INDIAN OCEAN AS AN AREA OF PEACE, FREE FROM FOREIGN PRESENCE."

4. THE CWC IS DISTRESSED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT HAS SO FAR MADE ONLY HALTING PROGRESS AND AFFIRMS

CONGRESS PARTY SUPPORT FOR SETTling ALL OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS WITH PAKISTAN THROUGH DIRECT, PEACEFUL, AND BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS "IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPIRIT AND PROVISIONS OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERVENTION

5. ON BANGLADESH, "THE CONGRESS NOTES WITH DISTRESS AND ANXIETY THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH. THE BRUTAL MURDER OF SHEIKH MUJIBAR RAHMAN, HIS FAMILY AND CLOSE ASSOCIATES HAS CAUSED DEEP ANGUISH AND SHOCK TO THE PEOPLE OF INDIA. ALTHOUGH NO COUNTRY CAN REMAIN UNAFFECTED AND UNCONCERNED ABOUT POLITICAL UPHEAVAL IN ITS NEIGHBORHOOD, INDIA HAS CONTINUED TO TREAT THE TRAGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH AS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR OF THAT COUNTRY. INDIA HAS A DEEP INTEREST AND VITAL STAKE IN THE INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BANGLADESH AND THE WELL-BEING OF ITS PEOPLE. UNFORTUNATELY EXTERNAL FORCES ARE PROMOTING DISCORD AND INSTABILITY IN THIS REGION. THE CONGRESS EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT BANGLADESH WILL EMERGE FROM THESE TRIALS, STABLE AND STRONG, TRUE TO ITS DECLARED POLICIES, SAFEGUARDING THE INTEREST AND WELFARE OF ALL SECTIONS OF ITS PEOPLE.

6. THE CWC RESOLUTION ALSO STAMPED WITH APPROVAL THE COMMONWEALTH SESSION AT JAMAICA, UNDERSCORED THE IMPORTANCE TO INDIA OF THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS, AND AFFIRMED THE INDIAN COMMITMENT TO A POLICY OF COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION IN BUILDING A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

7. IN A SEPARATE STATEMENT IN WHICH HE EMPHASIZED THAT INDIA SEEKS THE CONSOLIDATION OF WORLD PEACE, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER CHAVAN REFERRED TO INDIA'S ENDEAVOR TO SEEK BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE IS QUOTED, "THERE IS MUCH WE HAVE IN COMMON WITH THAT NATION, AND BASICALLY THERE IS NO REASON OUR RELATIONS SHOULD NOT BE GOOD. UNFORTUNATELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 NEW DE 17292 300555Z

THERE HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN ADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR NATIONAL CONCERNS AND SENSITIVITIES. CONSEQUANTLY THERE HAVE BEEN UPS AND DOWNS IN OUR RELATIONS, BUT WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO PLACE OUR RELATIONSHIP ON A MORE MATURE AND REALISTIC BASIS."

8. WHILE THE FORMAL FOREIGN POLICY RHETORIC IN CHADIGARH HAS BEEN STANDARD IF RELATIVELY MUTED, MRS. GANDHI FIRED HERSELF UP WHEN SPEAKING BEFORE YOUTH CONGRESS MEMBERS DECEMBER 29 AND WARNED THAT SOME INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FORCES STILL CONTINUED TO POSE A THREAT TO INDIA, THOUGH THEY WERE LYING DORMANT AT THE MOMENT (SEE SUMMARY ABOVE).

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